EDU 221

Spring 2013

Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA)

UbD Reflections –Chapter 2

In Chapter 2, of *Integrating Differentiated Instruction & Understanding by Design*, the authors C. Tomlinson and J. McTighe discuss the need for teachers to develop a holistic understanding their students’. This includes not only understanding their students’ strengths and weakness academically, but also their lives both in and out of school. The authors then go on to describe barriers which can inhibit student learning, and emphasize the need for teachers to be responsive and proactive educators. The chapter uses case studies of real situations in which familial, cognitive, social, and academic issues arise that impede the student’s ability to be successful. This includes details of the ways in which the teachers of these students either resolved the issue, or ways in which they were attempting to resolve the issue.

For me, this chapter highlights the fact that learning is a two way street. As a teacher, I could create beautiful and meaningful curriculum, but unless the diverse needs of my students’ are being met, in a responsive and adaptive way, then I will have fallen short in my role as teacher, and the learning I would want to see would not be there. Of the ten examples provided, regarding fostering relationships with students, I really loved the idea of having students use dialogue journals. I think it would be a great way to encourage students to share any information, academic or otherwise, with the teacher. I think this would be particularly valuable in a math class. For many students math is intimidating. I think being given a chance to express your thoughts about the class through a more comfortable medium (writing) not only encourages student reflection, but also helps the teacher be the responsive educator that students need. Moreover, I love the idea that a curriculum is not a document set in stone. Instead, it should be viewed as a constantly evolving work, adapting to meet the needs of the individuals it was designed to support.